

Agriculture - Western Provinces & Territories

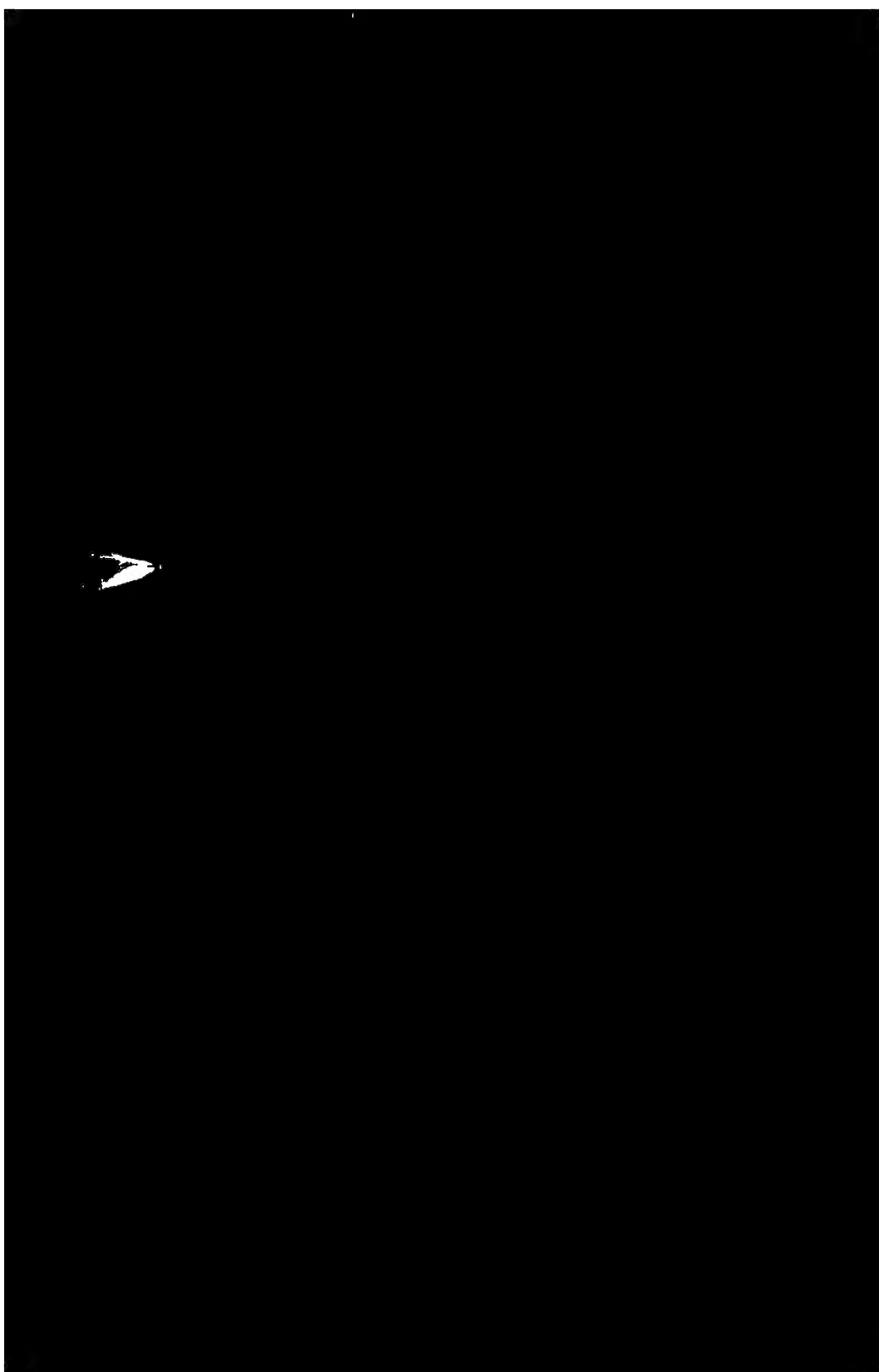
**Farmers' Action Program**  
of  
**ALBERTA FARMERS' UNION**  
and  
**UNITED FARMERS' of CANADA**  
(Saskatchewan Section)



Price 10c

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# FARMERS' ACTION PROGRAM

Endorsed and Supported by  
A.F.U. and U.F.C. (Sask. Section)

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## *Introduction*

As the people of the world make rapid progress toward a new order, the need for occupational organization becomes ever more important, and as the basic functions of a civilized society is to adequately provide food, clothing and shelter, it is imperative that those engaged in the production of those basic and essential requirements, receive a just price for the products of their labour to ensure a continuity of the consumption needs of the peoples of the world. While nearly all groups comprising human society have become fully organized to press their claims for advantageous recognition, or for resistance against other groups seeking to secure a greater share of national income, Canadian farmers, while making some progress through the development of co-operative services, remain deplorably unorganized for pressure or resistance progress, and unless we take action now, we shall emerge from the present war with the money lending and other private corporations in control of Canadian agriculture. Farmers will either submit themselves to be the subordinate slaves of the money controllers and other organized groups, or they will take definite and effective organized action now, and advance step by step with courage and determination to an intelligently planned goal, and the first of those steps shall be, action to attain security of land tenure, the right of possession and crop insurance.

Let us face the facts realistically. Debt legislation that merely postpones payment is no solution, it merely pushes the problem into the future. We must aim at removing the debt creating part of our economic system, and thus provide a solid foundation upon which to build sound Provincial and National economic structures.

The remedy lies in one or both of Political or Direct Action.

# 1. POLITICAL ACTION AND FARM BLOC

It is a fundamental right, that as the sovereign authority, the people should dictate policy and the responsible Government must carry out that policy. Occupational groups that are fully organized are able to secure ample recognition to their economic demands. Inadequately organized farmers cannot and will not secure a full measure of economic recognition, as they cannot submit a mandatory request from an effective majority, and the farm community and national economy have suffered in consequence. Governments who wish to remain in administrative office believe that it is politically wise to serve best those who are best organized.

Farmers can only secure an equitable share of the National Income which is largely obtained through the disposal of farm products, when by united action they can apply the necessary pressure to secure Parity Prices and other requirements essential to agricultural well-being.

All successful political candidates must be continuously made aware of the fact that they are the paid servants of the people, and that merely being elected does not confer upon them a "blank cheque" power to legislate without a mandate from the electors.

## 1. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

With strict observance to the "Non-Political" constitutional principle, which enables members to meet in common assembly and freely discuss problems which effect the economic and domestic life of those engaged in agriculture, regardless of their individual political beliefs, we must also however observe a constitutional objective of the Association:

"To promote the interests of its members by suggesting suitable legislation, and to make appropriate representations to the Legislature or to Parliament in order that such suggestions may be reflected in legislation."

It should be clearly understood by all members, that as only a very small proportion of our products are domestically consumed, farmers must therefore seek such trade agreements as will allow for their continuous and ever-expanding surplus production, and as the machinery of distribution is largely controlled by national and provincial legislative acts and regulations, it is imperative that farmers shall continue to recognize that the matter of assembling, marketing, processing and exporting farm products is an important part of their business.

It is therefore necessary that appropriate action be taken to solicit the favourable support to this Agricultural Program of all candidates and all members of the Legislature or of Parliament, when bills relative to agriculture are under discussion in the Provincial Legislature or the Parliament of Canada.

To a certain extent many of the disadvantages and disparities from which the Agricultural industry has suffered in the past have been allowed to happen by a lack of co-ordinating and directing influence on the part of the farmers' organizations themselves.

The voting strength of the farmers is greater than that of any other single occupational group and if properly informed and directed could exercise a controlling influence on all legislative bodies without taking partizan political action.

The farmers of the United States were instrumental in the formation of a "farm bloc" which exercised such a powerful influence in the United States Congress and Senate that they were able to obtain an approximate

Parity Price level while during the same period Canadian farmers were almost submerged in a dreadful depression caused almost entirely by a lack of Parity Prices.

It took the prices brought about by wartime demands to enable Canadian Agriculture to recover and although it must be admitted that the conditions are somewhat different in the United States, yet Canadian farmers are not ready to admit that abundant production must automatically result in a price which is "less than the cost of production" being paid to them.

According to the findings of the Hot Springs Conference there is a real need for all the food we can raise, therefore, reasonable people demand that if it is the intention of National Governments to satisfy that demand, a reasonable price must be paid to the producer who produces it, and all Governments have it in their power to do this.

The farmers who compose the strongest single occupational group in Canada, therefore, have the remedy in their own hands. They can encourage by the vote, and in this case encouragement will almost amount to compulsion, the formation of a "farm bloc" composed of those members of Parliament who represent rural constituencies, to get together and vote in Parliament, regardless of party affiliation, for such measures as are requested by organized Agriculture.

It is generally recognized that it is for the good of all the people in the country to have a prosperous Agriculture, therefore, such a farm bloc is justified in making the demand of any Government that NOTHING shall be allowed to stand in the way of a practical program for paying Parity Prices for Farm Products.

## 2. DIRECT ACTION

Failing just and equitable recognition of organized farmers' requests, farmers must be prepared to take Direct Action in an organized intelligent manner. Such action is constitutionally legal, and by the Trades Union reasoning that "a fair day's pay for a fair day's work" is required to ensure a decent living and working efficiency. A parity price return for the products of agricultural labour is necessary to effectively maintain occupational security and provide equitable living conditions. No business, trade or occupation, can operate at a loss indefinitely. Farmers must, therefore, in defence of their occupation and their living decide that no farm products will be made available to others, if for any reason beyond the farmers own control price values drop below production cost.

### 2. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

We wish to point out to all other organized occupational groups that the farmer is not the "price-maker" for his own products.

The impossibility of knowing what our complete output may be is one of the chief reasons for this, and we cannot plan to just "fill" the market without incurring grave danger, owing to the uncertainties of nature, of bringing about famine conditions. Farmers do not wish to do this as they do not believe in the economics of scarcity; but the important point must not be lost sight of that a prosperous agricultural population provides one of the largest and most effective markets for those engaged in other industrial activities.

For this reason any "direct" action by way of withholding agricultural products from the market until a "just" price is obtained, should receive the unanimous support of all other occupational groups who will not have to endure a prolonged food shortage such as would be brought about if

the farmers reduced production in order to bring about the necessary price raise.

It will be apparent that all farmers, both organized and unorganized, will have to give their active support in order to make direct action possible and successful. Therefore, those farmers who do not yet belong to their Union who wish to see agricultural prices maintained at a fair level have one clear duty to perform. Join the Union and help to do the job which will benefit yourself and which you recognize is necessary.

The question of collecting membership dues by the taxation route, or compulsory membership as it is called, has a direct bearing on the subject of Direct Action. No "strike" action could be successful unless a large majority of the farmers participated.

### **3. Ultimate Objective-PARITY PRICES**

The income of the agricultural population must be in conformity with others who comprise our citizenship, and farmers must therefore receive an equitable share of the National Income.

A proper relationship of prices must prevail at all times, so that the prices received for agricultural products shall enable farmers to buy an equivalent amount of goods or services produced or rendered by any other occupational group.

#### **3. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES**

As the economy of the nation depends entirely upon wealth annually produced by primary producers, it is essential that sufficient price return for delivered products be made available to producers to assure continuity of production.

Service costs of the nation are very high, this includes Dominion, Provincial and Municipal Government, Universities, Colleges, Schools, Banks, Insurance, Finance, and Mortgage Corporations, Postal, Policing and Fire Protection Services, Hospital, Medical, and other health and burial services, transportation, manufacturing, processing, distributing and assembling services.

All these and many other services essential to a national economy, directly and indirectly, take a large share of the new wealth produced annually, and unless a sufficient recompense in the form of money is returned to primary producers, to adequately maintain primary production, either primary industry will suffer and become inefficient, or necessary services will become restricted, and both will then consequently suffer, and adversely effect the entire nation. There must be an equitable balance between the price of goods and services, and the price return for primary products, i. e., Parity Prices.

### **FEDERAL POLICIES**

#### **4. FLOOR PRICES**

Until a proper system of parity prices is established farmers must be guaranteed floor prices for their products, on a scale not less than prices (including bonus) received by producers in August, 1944. At six-month intervals floor prices should be reviewed, and adjusted if necessary to preserve an equitable ratio with the prices of goods and services that farmers must buy.

#### **4. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES**

It should be clearly understood that the Agricultural Prices Stabilization Act, of the Dominion Government, proposes to arrange for the export of surplus products and the maintenance of reasonable prices on the domestic market.

The Act does not definitely provide to the producer minimum or floor prices for farm products regardless of the actual selling price.

Provision is made in the Act to enable the Prices Stabilization Board to provide subsidies or take other measures to avoid price collapses.

Farmers should closely watch the administration of this Act, as while it can, if applied with courage, serve a useful purpose, it is sufficiently elastic that it could prove to be only another costly piece of interfering administrative machinery that does not administer to the interests of farmers, and cannot in any event take the place of an intelligent parity price policy.

## 5. FOREIGN TRADE

After provision for Canadian consumable requirements has been taken care of, all barriers which may restrict or retard the free exchange of Canadian surplus production with other countries, must be removed, and international trade agreements must be made on the basis of value.

Insane competition for foreign markets which breeds international animosity resulting in war, must be eliminated.

In the meantime, should the price received for exported Canadian surplus products be less than Canadian floor prices, the equalizing amount required to make the necessary financial adjustments, must be met by the nation through a direct issue of the Bank of Canada. Active Canadian agencies should be established in all countries to accelerate and develop the free exchange of goods between Canada and other countries, particularly India, China and Russia, wherein there is extensive potential trade possibilities.

### 5. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

We can state without fear of successful contradiction that nowhere else in the world do so few people produce so much food, as do the farmers of the Prairie Provinces of Canada, and as wheat, up to the present time, is our major production, and as our present population can only consume about twenty-five percent of a normal year's wheat production, we must of necessity give attention to the disposal of our surplus wheat to buyers in foreign lands, and through further diversification of the use of farm products continue the progress made during the past few years. Beef, hog, dairy and poultry products of high quality are now produced on Canadian farms in much greater volume than at any previous time. This diversification has been urged as a wartime measure to satisfy the needs of consumers in other countries, and unless these markets are maintained, or other markets secured, to take delivery of from 1.5 to 1.8 billions of dollars of exportable surpluses, many branches of Canadian farm production will be destroyed or greatly curtailed. We must, therefore, give attention to foreign trade for the purpose of disposal of all exportable farm surpluses, and the import of essentially required goods.

Therefore trade with other countries should be placed on the basis of an exchange of surplus Canadian production (after the requirements of the people of this country have been satisfied) for the goods of other countries which are required by Canadians. This will do away with the insane competition for foreign markets which is the breeding ground of all wars.

Canadian producers must be paid fair prices for the goods produced for export, and it must be the responsibility of the National Finance Commission through the Bank of Canada to make the necessary financial arrangements for any adjustments in price necessary for purposes of trade with other countries. This will put an end to the racket under which the farmer has been made the victim of manipulated world markets.

## 6. FINANCIAL POLICY

The people of Canada must have complete control of the Nations' money system which must be operated under the direction of parliamentary policy with a National Finance Commission in charge, under the chairmanship of a person who shall have the power of a judge of a Superior Court.

Provision should be made by the Nation to provide:

- (1) Parity Prices for Farm Products.
- (2) Adequate credit at cost to finance agriculture and all other essential requirements.
- (3) An equitable adjustment and settlement of debts.
- (4) Maintain consumer prices at fair levels, which will enable the people to buy the nations total production, including imported goods in exchange for exports.

### 6. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

It is manifestly undemocratic that the sovereign power of creating, issuing and withdrawing money or credit, thereby controlling economic policy, should be exercised by private institutions. This power vested in the chartered banks at the present time should be discontinued and should be exercised by the National Bank of Canada for the service of the people.

It is a basic principle of any scientific monetary system that money should be created and issued as goods are produced, and it should be withdrawn and cancelled as goods are consumed. Furthermore this should be done in such a manner that at all times the public should have purchasing power equal to the collective prices of consumable goods on the market.

The principle of maintaining a balance between consumer purchasing power and the prices of goods for sale to consumers is fundamental to any sound monetary system, either in peace or in war.

Therefore the National Finance Commission or Administrative Board should be required to establish a proper system of accounting and, from time to time, ascertain the total prices of goods available for purchase by consumers and the total purchasing power to the public. Any surplus purchasing power should be withdrawn by means of an equitable system of taxation and any deficiency of purchasing power should be corrected by reduced taxation or by an increased issue of credit in the most equitable manner as authorized by Parliament, e.g., educational grants, price subsidies, family allowances, health services, non-contributory security grants, etc.

Agriculture, industry and trade should be able to expand freely to provide the goods and services wanted by the public. Hence the financial requirements of agriculture, industry and trade should govern monetary policy and not allow monetary policy to govern the required activities of economic production.

Therefore adequate credit on equitable terms should be made available to agriculture, industry and trade to finance all wanted production.

## 7. FREIGHT RATES

An equitable adjustment must be made in the grossly unfair freight rate structure which discriminates in freight charges against prairie farmers exporting and importing goods on all lines of railway, including the Hudson Bay Railway.

As a first step toward such equitable adjustment a thorough



investigation into the capital structure of the Canadian National Railway be conducted with a view to eliminating all fictitious values from the project and a per ton, per mile, rate on the same classification should apply all across Canada.

## 7. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

Flannelette blankets can be sent all the way over the mountains to Vancouver and brought back to Calgary or Edmonton cheaper than if freighted to Calgary or Edmonton direct from Ontario. The rate on this product in a cotton goods car to Vancouver is \$1.75 per 100 pounds. To Edmonton and Calgary the rate is \$4.53 ½ per 100 pounds. This actually permits the reshipping back from Vancouver to the town of Holden, 60 miles east of Edmonton, at a combined rate which is less than from eastern Canada to Edmonton. Canned goods move from the East to Vancouver for \$1.50 per 100 pounds, but to Calgary or Edmonton the rate is \$1.98. On a ton mile basis, the Calgary rate is 200 percent of the Vancouver rate. Similarly such commodities as baking powder, confectionery, dry goods, hardware and tools, boots and shoes, paints and varnishes enjoy relatively low commodity rates from eastern Canada to Vancouver but take the higher class rates to Alberta points. Barbed wire, an important item in farm costs, carries a rate of 75 cents to Vancouver but the rate to Alberta points is \$1.98.

The explanation given is that of ocean competition, but how valid is this argument? If a carload of barbed wire can be freighted to Vancouver for 75 cents because competition renders that rate necessary, by what stretch of imagination or justification can a rate of nearly \$2.00 be charged on the same load to Alberta? It is obvious that these discriminatory freight rates were framed to get for the railways all that the traffic would bear rather than a fair service charge. Such a policy is not a foundation upon which a strong industrial Canada can be built and what is of more immediate importance to Western farmers, it is not a policy which will permit the development of Prairie industry to provide opportunities for employment after the war. Because of this aspect of the situation, we suggest that it is the duty of the Dominion Government (Parliament) to take all necessary steps to assure that the entire freight rate structure be revised upon a basis which will be equitable to all parts of Canada.

## 8. EDUCATION

The Federal Government must make available, interest free grants on an equitable basis, to provide the highest possible standard of education services under the constitutional control of Provincial Governments.

Special attention must be given to improve the Health condition and educational standard of our Indian and Metis population.

Educational facilities should be financed by Provincial and Dominion Governments and all degrees of education should be made available free to all students, regardless of race, creed, location or financial circumstances within the capacity of the student to absorb educational knowledge with special provision for children with low intelligence quotas.

## 8. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

The health and educational standard of the people in any country go hand in hand. Good health and good education are basically essential to provide every individual with an equal opportunity to engage in the occupation of his or her choice.

Every healthy, well educated person is a valuable asset to the economy of any nation, and every unhealthy and every under-educated person is a costly liability to any national or provincial economy.

As these social essentials are universally required we maintain that the cost of providing substantial assistance for all educational services should be borne by the nation, and that the appropriate departments of each Provincial Government be responsible for the carrying out of a uniform education policy in their respective provinces. Children should be considered as the greatest assets which any Nation has, and no effort should be spared to afford every opportunity for the greatest development to every individual regardless of parental financial means.

## 9. INCOME TAX

All single persons receiving incomes less than \$1,000 and married persons with incomes less than \$2,000 at 1945 price levels shall be exempt from income tax.

For income tax purposes farmers' incomes must be computed on a five-year income average, and any income used to make payment in respect of principal on the home half-section of land and interest (other than debts incurred for normal current living expenses) and on land taxes, to rank as production costs and shall be exempt from income tax.

## 9. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

It is grossly unfair to compute the income of farmers on a single year basis for income tax purposes. There is no business, trade, profession or enterprise, wherein owing to climatic uncertainty and the ravages of pest and disease, where the risks or hazards are as great as that of farming.

These causes and extreme price fluctuations make the income of farmers the most unstable of all occupations. It is, therefore, unfair that farmers should be subjected to heavy taxation in a single year of good yield and fair price, after perhaps two or three years of below production cost returns for their marketable products.

We, therefore, maintain that for taxation purposes, farmers' incomes be computed on a five-year income average. Payments made out of current farm income on all debts incurred, prior to crop year 1939-40 to be exempt from income tax.

## 10. PENSIONS

Since 1939 the over-all cost of living has increased according to Government's own figures nearly 18% and the small increases provided to pensioners during the past year is far short of meeting the increased living cost. Pensions for the aged, crippled persons and blind persons of any age must, therefore, be increased to provide a decent living standard.

## 10. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

It is a proven fact that the production powers of Canada are adequate to supply all citizens of Canada with ample supplies of all those things which are produced in Canada.

The various Governments of Canada, both Dominion and Provincial, of various political beliefs have for a considerable time recognized the jus-

tice and necessity of providing pensions for the blind and crippled, the aged and the needy.

The fixed amounts which have been set in times when the range of prices was much lower than at present, have proven wholly inadequate to provide a reasonably comfortable standard of living and the amount of the pension should be increased in accordance with the rise in prices.

Therefore, as the needs of the pensioners can nearly all be supplied by the products of Canada, there is no reason why their pensions should be on a scale less than will provide for their ample needs up to the extent that Canadian production can supply these. As a matter of fact the pensioners furnish us with a much needed market in peace time for our otherwise surplus goods.

In addition, many of these pensioners are old timers whose industry and enterprise of many years ago helped to lay the foundation for the plentiful production which we enjoy today. In a sense, we owe them a debt and we should not be niggardly in paying it.

## 11. CO-OPERATIVE FINANCING

As Co-Operative enterprises are being developed in ever-increasing magnitude, large sums of credit are required to finance the operations of large Co-Operatives, and as it is inconsistent that such non-profit enterprise should pay high interest charges for the use of credit, we demand the act governing the Bank of Canada be amended to allow any Co-Operative organization which mobilizes wealth, to have the right to hypothecate the documentary title to the aforesaid real wealth of its patrons with the Bank of Canada and shall receive in exchange, at cost, the value in money represented by these securities at the existing market prices.

### 11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

Knowing that money and credit are socially necessary instruments in any modern economy, we believe that it is economically unsound to impose any price beyond actual service cost for the use of money or credit in maintaining or developing public social services in the nation, province or municipality.

Such services are for public conveniences only and are not administered for profit.

Co-Operative services are non-profit activities, promoted by sections of our citizens for the purpose of eliminating duplications and waste and doing for themselves many services of a semi-social character at a lower price, than others who seek profits would perform those services for.

It is, therefore, inconsistent that organized Co-Operatives should continue the contradictory practice of borrowing profit-earning credit at unfair interest rates from privately operated institutions, whose primary function is to make profit, for the purpose of maintaining the operations of non-profit Co-Operative enterprises.

It is, of course, absolutely essential that all Co-Operatives must be genuine and conform to certain regulations which ensure that the members and patrons shall receive a fair share of the benefits obtained by co-operation.

## 12. MARKETING ACT

Agricultural producers have in the past been handicapped in their marketing efforts through the lack of marketing legislation which would enable them as co-operators to market their products freely with co-operators or others in other countries,

we must for this purpose therefore have enacted, by the Federal Government in collaboration with the Provincial Government, a Canadian Natural Products Marketing Act.

## 12. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

For the purpose of marketing-uniformity a Federal Natural Products Marketing Act is imperative. Broker, Jobbers and Commission Firms, who are largely in control of Provincial and National exports, have little or no interest in the price secured for the disposal of products so long as they secure a favourable margin in the transaction, and in their anxiety to keep the goods moving, they frequently undersell each other to secure the market. This action in turn forces down the price paid to producers, who invariably are the sufferers of unfair competition by those who also have no interest in the price received by farmers. Some measure of price stability has been achieved in provinces operating under Provincial Marketing Act, and much greater price stability through the orderly movement of products could be achieved by a Federal Marketing Board to control the orderly flow of National exports, and endowed with power to stabilize prices at an average cost-plus level.

## 13. LIVESTOCK BOARD

There is no branch of agriculture wherein there is as much confusion as that of livestock.

There are a great many Government appointed Boards, Committees, Supervisors, Inspectors and Investigators, all of whom appear to lack the cohesion necessary to the efficient operation of this very important branch of agriculture.

We, therefore, request that legislation be enacted by the Federal Government to make possible the creation of a Board of Livestock Commissioners, upon which shall be a majority of representatives, recommended by farm organizations.

## 13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

The dissatisfaction which has prevailed and is prevailing among livestock men shows the need for a Livestock Board to supervise the industry so that the interests of the producers shall be assured.

In response to Government urging, the livestock producers replied with tremendously increased production. Marketing conditions, however, were not satisfactory. No provision was made apparently to take care of any heavier run than the existing marketing and processing facilities already had capacity for, even though production was more than double. The resulting congestion was allowed to result in losses to the producers because of delayed killings, the necessity for reshipment and also throwing on the producer the whole responsibility for getting his stock, hogs especially, to market within the proper weight limits, even though the facilities for this were not adequate. The price and quota control was used in such a way that the producer was mystified as to the real intentions of the Government and was not able to lay intelligent plans for increases or reductions in his future operations. For instance, a lower hog quota with Great Britain was announced at just about the same time as a bonus was made on feed grains and this left the justified thought in the mind of the livestock raiser that a reduction of livestock was desirable.

The cattle and sheep situation has also been very confused. The refusal of the Canadian Government to open the United States market at a time when Canadian prices were declining owing to the inability of the home

market to absorb the offerings caused many finishers of these kinds of livestock to curtail their operations.

Since then the Minister of Agriculture or those speaking for the Department have urged farmers to stay with hogs and cattle for which there is an unlimited market and further reduce wheat acreage. In the opinion of many farmers the present price of wheat and coarse grains compares very favourably with the comparative prices of hogs, sheep and cattle, and the natural tendency will be to increase grain at the expense of livestock. However, the determining factor is probably the labour situation and many farmers find themselves absolutely unable to carry on their livestock activities to the extent they would like, because of this factor.

## **14. CROP INSURANCE**

A more adequate form of crop insurance than that provided by the Prairie Farm Assistance Act is necessary, and we recognize that it is fundamentally correct that those securing the benefit of insurance should pay the cost of such insurance. On the principle of establishing a reserve in the good years to offset loss in the year of crop failure, we urge, therefore, that the Dominion Government give further consideration to extending the scope of the P.F.A.A., to provide a proper insurance against crop failure caused through elements beyond the control of farmers.

### **14. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES**

The great uncertainty of farm income caused mainly by climatic circumstances, pests and diseases which affects crops and animals, has for many years caused organized farmers to consider methods of insuring against the many crop hazards, for the purpose of assuring a fair minimum income.

We believe a fair pattern has been established by the Unemployment Insurance Act, which, during the recent years of high employment, has succeeded in accumulating a fund in excess of \$250,000,000 upon which to draw during unemployment periods.

We believe that similarly with unemployment insurance, a minimum crop loss relief insurance will depend upon contributions from those engaged in farming and from the Dominion Government, we therefore recommend that the Prairie Farm Assistance Act be amended to increase up to two percent the deductions from the price of all grain marketed (and also from all other delivered products) and that a proportionate amount be contributed by the Dominion Government in the ratio that total National Income bears to total Agricultural income. And further, that appropriate changes be made in the Act to more equitably define a crop failure as one resulting from any elements of nature beyond control of man in any section of the community in which the Act applies.

## **PROVINCIAL POLICIES**

### **15. SECURITY OF LAND TENURE**

We request that a wider measure of protection against the constant threat of dispossession of land and machinery is necessary to ensure the high-operating level necessary to the maintenance of our prairie agricultural economy. For this purpose the protective powers of the Provincial Government must be extended to cover the family farm and the worker's home.

### **15. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES**

Since the outbreak of war the indispensable importance of Agriculture has forced itself upon all people whether Agricultural or otherwise, as well as upon all Governments.

However, a considerable body of farmers were in debt and although producing farm produce in an efficient manner were threatened with dispossession because they were unable to meet their contractual obligations in dollars. This condition reached such a stage that it became a threat to the ability of Canada to supply the food stuffs for the Allies and herself for the conduct of the War.

The Dominion Government recognizing that the real results desirable to obtain was the production of food stuffs, irrespective of the farmer's ability to pay his debts, introduced an Order-in-Council which granted temporary security to farmers who were producing food stuffs efficiently. (Even though they were considerably in debt.)

However, this protection is only for the duration of the War, and we submit that from more than one point of view, if it is deemed to be essential to the welfare of the Nation to grant Security of Tenure to farmers during wartime, it is equally good policy in peace time.

People should be able to get sufficient to eat in Peace as well as during War and if the exigencies of War have brought about a change in the economy which enables every individual citizen to get enough to eat, thereby requiring Agriculture to produce up to its limit, then very serious consideration and investigation should be made into the causes which permit such satisfactory results in wartime, so that they may also be carried into effect in peace time.

The farmer's job is to produce Agricultural products, which provide the raw materials for the food and clothing of the people. Having produced as plentifully as his own efficiency, working in conjunction with nature will allow, he may be said to have accomplished his task. However, his continued existence as an efficient farmer depends absolutely on the price which he receives for his production in relationship to the price which he has to pay for the supplies he needs.

Until such an adjustment has been made in our price regulating machinery so as to ensure that the products of the farm are exchangeable on a fair basis with all other products, it is in the National interest to give all efficient farmers absolute security of tenure on their farms and in their homes.

Agriculture has got to be financed in such a way that a farmer is not threatened with eviction from his home because natural conditions make it impossible for him to reap a harvest. Therefore, he must have security of tenure on the land and this security must be dependent on one thing only. That the land is being used in the right way, according to our knowledge, for the common good. No other consideration such as poor crops, or loss of crops, sickness, poor prices, or untoward weather conditions should be allowed to threaten the farmer's right of possession. This power of security of tenure comes within the rights of the Province and must be exerted.

## 16. HEALTH

We believe that complete health services should be made available to all Canadian citizens as a national social responsibility and that cost of same be borne by the Dominion Treasury.

In the meantime, however, we urge the Provincial Government to provide the maximum health service possible for their people with due consideration to their ability to pay for any required service.

### 16. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

We wish to urge that Alberta be put back on to standard time. The present daylight saving time has not resulted in any appreciable advantage in the Western Provinces, and this was admitted by Mr. Howe in dealing with this matter in the House of Commons.

We are convinced that the present regulations are not only detrimental to the interests of Agriculture, but also to the health of young children,

especially in country points. (If they wish to attend school.) During the winter months the early time causes them to endure hardships which are detrimental to their ability to receive instruction as well as to their Health.

## 17. Re: RETURNED MEN

In accordance with our democratic rights as citizens, we call upon the Federal Government to instruct the Soldiers Settlement Board to forthwith cancel all outstanding debts due by these veterans of World War One and to give these men clear title to their land as some restitution for the disgraceful treatment which they have received.

### 17. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

Canada has at present a large amount of unoccupied and unused land.

The land of a country undoubtedly belongs to the people of the country.

Our soldiers fought and suffered to preserve this land for all of us together with democratic right and privileges.

Soldier Settlers of World War No. 1 carried out similar responsibilities and sacrifices, and having won the war took up land under the Soldier Settlement Board. They have demonstrated their ability to produce and deliver agricultural products, yet owing to an iniquitous price system have been unable to produce and deliver dollars as required by agreement.

Many of these soldiers from World War No. 1, have sons and daughters now serving in World War No. 2 to preserve for all the right to rule over and use their own land. Many of these aged Veterans are now living in fear of eviction from their farms and homes because of their inability to deliver dollars according to contract.

Justice demands that they should be entitled to the privilege of making a home for themselves on the land whose rights they fought to defend and shall have at least an equal opportunity to a home as safe as all others whose security was ensured by the military victory of these fighting men.

We, therefore, wish to call special attention to the following resolution which was presented to the Annual Provincial Convention of the Alberta Farmers' Union, held in Edmonton, at the Masonic Temple, 23rd to 26th January, 1945, and carried unanimously by an enthusiastic vote.

WHEREAS the Soldier Settlers, those forgotten men of World War One, who to their sorrow took up loans under the Soldier Settlement Board, have visited Ottawa and presented their claims for justice to the Federal Government, and

WHEREAS the shameful treatment of these men who served Canada so faithfully in the last war is a reflection on those whose courage and sacrifice on the battlefronts of Europe today as a reminder of the debt of gratitude we owe to Canada's fighting sons of both wars, and

WHEREAS the continuation of this injustice to these Soldier Settlement Board victims cannot fail to be a barrier to the proper rehabilitation of our sons and daughters in this war.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by this Convention of the Alberta Farmers' Union that, in accordance with our democratic rights as citizens, we call upon the Federal Government to instruct the Soldier Settlement Board to forthwith cancel all outstanding debts due by these veterans of World War One, and to give these men clear title to their land as some restitution for the disgraceful treatment which they have received.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Prime Minister, the Minister of Veterans' Affairs, to all other Members of Parliament and to all the principal farmers' organizations.

## 18. RURAL ELECTRIFICATION

As no farm home improvement plan could be adequate without the service of electric power for domestic and other uses on the farm, a comprehensive system of Rural Electrification to cover the main settled parts of the province should be undertaken as soon as materials are available. This should be developed by the Provincial Power Commission as a public enterprise on the basis of service.

### 18. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

In Alberta we have great potential power available in our many large rivers. Even a small part of this would provide light and power for all Alberta farms. Steam plants also could be located where coal is available and used to supplement the hydro system.

It is quite feasible to set up a Provincial system which will make service available to all the main settled areas of Alberta.

This would be best if it is planned and developed as a comprehensive system under the Provincial Power Commission, which is the only body that can give service at cost.

In Ontario, the Provincial Hydro-Electric system has been an outstanding success in bringing power to the farms. We can do much the same in Alberta if we go about it in the right way.

Electricity on the farm is of tremendous importance to farm people. One kilowatt hour of electrical energy costs only about 5c on the average from a power line but it is equal to work which a man does in pumping water for two days or shovelling for nine days, according to the report of the Manitoba Electrification Enquiry.

Small farm electric plants are inefficient in comparison to hydro-power. Cost per kilowatt hour average 25c when up-keep and depreciation are included. Even wind-chargers for which no fuel is required show a cost range of 7.7c to 14c per kilowatt hour on the same basis.

Any scheme for Rural Electrification depends for its success on the ability of the farmers to pay for the services they require. This renders it essential that stable prices for farm products at a Parity level be provided so that the farmers can buy the services they require on the same basis as they sell their own production.

It is also necessary that the power be made available within the same distance of the farm as urban power services approach to the residence lot in a town or city in order that rural and urban users be given similar treatment.

If farmers want the benefits of electricity on the farm at cost, one effective way is to join this Union and help bring pressure to get action.

## 19. INDUSTRY

We urge that the Provincial Government take whatever steps are necessary to have established other industrial enterprises including the production of alcohol, glucose, glycol, oils, plastics and other goods from wheat and other surplus farm production, and that Co-operatives also be urged to engage in such industrial development whenever possible.

### 19. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

One difficulty in approaching the contribution which agriculture may make to post-war reconstruction is the lack of a clear understanding of the scope and component parts of agriculture. A clarification of the ad-



ministrative concept for agriculture, from a national and provincial point of view, would do much to harmonize understanding and to secure united action.

In order to cater to the needs of the Canadian people by making use of our own Natural Resources to the utmost extent that it is sound economy to do so, the possibilities of the resources of the west should be investigated with a view to supplying our home markets as far as possible.

Such action would also provide for the rehabilitation of service personnel to some extent.

In addition to the possibilities of Chemurgy as applied to Agricultural products the following direct products should receive ample consideration. Large forests producing lumber which provides one of the most satisfactory materials for building purposes in the West are extensive and if properly exploited will provide lumber for all time. We have an abundance of coal for fuel and also gas production. Oil for individual heating and power units, which are especially suitable on farms in isolated areas beyond the scope of rural electrification. Salt, silica and clay which are essential elements towards a home market economy catering to the wants of the people in every walk of life.

The possibilities of the immense deposits of tar sands in Alberta must also be fully recognized.

It has been estimated that there is a possibility of obtaining 100,000 barrels of oil per day from the oil sands of the Athabasca River valley, and in addition the by-product after the oil has been obtained will provide an all-weather road building material peculiarly adapted to the climate of the Canadian West. It is waterproof and at the same time has the quality of being able to recover from frost heaving such as no other material possesses as well as being less liable to damage owing to its elastic nature.

It is also a splendid substance for floors in barns and farm outhouses and even barn-yards might be surfaced with it, thus doing away with the mud and slop which would make the work of those who have to be employed around barn-yards much more pleasant and efficient.

## **20. HUDSON BAY - CHURCHILL RAILWAY**

The practicability of the Hudson Bay-Port Churchill Route to export farm products and import Western Canada requirements having been proved, we request that the Saskatchewan Government in co-operation with Alberta and Manitoba Governments, if possible, forthwith secure from the Dominion Government, the power to maintain, operate and administer under a strong representative Western Committee, the Hudson Bay Railway and port and harbor facilities at Churchill as utilities through which to export western produce to Eastern Canada, the United States, Latin Americas and European countries, and to import goods from those points, and that western trade representatives be established at appropriate port centres to facilitate and promote trade arrangements.

### **20. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES**

After many years of urge and pressure by western residents the Railway to Port Churchill and harbor facilities at the Port was completed at a cost of about \$46,000,000, which amount was secured for that purpose by the sale of lands in the Western Provinces.

Even with the present unnecessary high cargo and vessel insurance costs, wheat can be shipped from central Saskatchewan to Liverpool via

the Hudson Bay-Churchill Route at a reduced cost of six cents per bushel, as against the present cost to Liverpool via the Port Arthur-Montreal Route.

It is estimated that pooling transportation costs on wheat from all points, in the Prairie Provinces over the Hudson Bay Railway to Port Churchill, a saving of between three and four cents per bushel would benefit all farmers shipping over the Route. Similar reductions in transportation costs on other products can also accrue to shippers.

Other benefits can be available as we develop a two-way shipping service and import goods essential to our western needs, from distant points to which our western exports are delivered.

(The Western Committee be empowered to carry out an investigation to discover if there is any valid reason why this route should not be used.)

## 21. FINAL

We herewith reiterate our long established policy, that the natural resources of the province and the nation are the heritage of the people and should therefore, remain in the ownership of the people and operated in the interests of the people with at all times due consideration to preservation of such natural resources for the benefit of future generations, and further that public utilities used by all people, such as banks, publicly used transportation and electrical services should be owned by the people and operated for the service of the people.

We believe that in the achievement of Parity and the building of an equitable state of society, co-operation is essential.

